(iv) The Ministry of Agriculture has implemented the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), whose impact evaluations have shown that watershed based interventions have led to increase in ground water recharge. Soil and water conservation works are also included under various activities of area development programmes, being undertaken by the Department of Land Resources. However, funds under the above programme are not exclusively allotted for checking declining ground water, which is a resultant activity of moisture conservation works undertaken for the development of watershed areas.

National Competition Policy

*199. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are several distortions in the economic management of the country, as often policies are framed without acknowledging the market process;

(b) whether Government are considering adoption of a National Competition Policy to provide a declared intent to its resolve of promoting competition; and

(c) whether Government have received any representation on this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) No, Sir. Appropriate measures for management of the Indian economy are taken by the Government, from time to time, keeping in view the prevailing conditions.

(b) Government has already taken legislative and administrative measures to enable competition issues in the economy to be addressed. To this end, in addition to sectoral regulators, the Competition Act, 2002 was enacted following recommendations of the High Level Committee on Competition Policy and Law set up under the Chairmanship of Shri S.V.S. Raghavan. Competition Commission of India (CCI) has been set up and Government is taking measures to enable its full and proper

functioning. Further, the Government has initiated consultations on a policy on Competition issues.

<c) Yes, Sir.

Declaration of dividends below level of earning per share

*200. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of the general tendency on the part of companies including those in which Government have substantial interest, to declare dividends much below the level of earning per share, which effects the shareholders' interests;

(b) whether Government propose to make suitable changes in the company law to address this problem; and

(c) if so, by when that is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) Under the Companies Act, 1956 there is no requirement of mandatory declaration of dividend at any given level.

(b) There is no such proposal.

(c) Does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Air connectivity to regional stations

1355. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to have regional stations also connected by the air routes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether one or more cities in Bihar will also come under this scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?